

RAKKASAN REPORT

13 March, 2005



The official publication of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team

Volume 1. issue 2

Marksmanship Taken to New Level

By Pfc. Matt Wrzesinski
3rd BCT Public Affairs

Rakkasans entered the fourth day of the 21 day Intensified Marksmanship Program and Advanced Combat Techniques training Thursday.

In this first phase of the training, Soldiers work on the fundamentals of marksmanship and take it one step further zeroing their M-4s out to 600 meters.

According to Bill Balda, instructor, the Soldiers were given a class on the fundamentals of marksmanship,

including body positioning and how weather conditions effect a bullet after being fired.

Ten civilians from the Rifle and Pistol Association were brought in to conduct the training. The civilians, five from Tennessee and

five from Kentucky, have extensive knowledge and have competed in numerous competitions.

The objective of this part of the training is to make the Soldiers more effective with their weapons.

"We are here to teach the Soldiers all they need to know about firing an M-4," said Balda. "The more a Soldier knows the better he can engage and kill a target in the real world."

This phase is the first step in the training. As the training progresses, Soldiers will conduct reflexive fire drills then move on to advanced close quarter combat techniques.

This phase of training will be instructed by SHD Consulting Incorporated. All of the instructors have worked in United States Special Operations units or law enforcement and bring a plethora of knowledge and experience to share with the soldiers.



Photo by Pfc. Matt Wrzesinski
Sgt. 1st Class Rob Ferguson, Bravo Troop, 3rd Battalion, applies techniques taught to him by instructor Bill Balda during IMPACT training Thursday.



Photo by Pfc. Matt Wrzesinski
Sgt. David Hubert, A Co., 2nd Bn, zeroes his weapon at 300m while Jack Klotzback, Tennessee Pistol and Rifle Association watches where Hubert hits.



Contents

Page 2 Rak 6 notes

Advanced Machine Gunnery Training

Page 3 Tenn-Martin visits / Chaplain Notes

Page 4 626 Gatekeepers in JRTC

BOSS Breifs

RAK 6 Notes

Rakkasan Troopers – I want to tell you one more time how proud I am of every one of you for the hard work you put into the JRTC rotation. Many of you got your quota – good job.

The road doesn't get any easier. We have a limited amount of time to get ready for Iraq, and I expect every leader to take advantage of it. When you get on that airplane to fly out of here, it's too late to wish you'd trained a particular task. JRTC showed us some rough spots – let's hone the edge now.

There have been over 100 Soldier deaths this year across the Army in vehicle accidents. Excessive speed, alcohol, fatigue – there are many factors involved – but there's no excuse. We must stop losing our Soldiers on the road, period. It begins with leaders and buddy teams looking out for one another. Like I told you at Ft. Polk, every one of you is far too important to sacrifice uselessly.

From now until we depart for Iraq, every thing we do must be focused on preparing for combat. Build on the lessons learned at JRTC, and give 110% every day. RAKKASAN!

Rakkasans Burst into Machine Gun Training

By Pfc. Matt Wrzesinski
3rd BCT Public Affairs

Rakkasans began the live fire portion of the Advanced Machine Gunnery training Wednesday.

This program is derived from standards and training of the 75th Ranger Regiment.

The purpose of the training is to equip weapon squad leaders with the knowledge to train their Soldiers in advanced machine gunnery techniques.

"By taking part in this training, the squad leaders can empathize with their Soldiers," said Maj. Bruce

Byers, head trainer. They are doing the same drills they will be training their soldiers on, and they are performing them at a very high standard.

Along with Byers, master machine gunners from the Australian military are leading the training.

According to Byers, the Australians bring experience and different tactics, techniques and procedures that give the soldiers a different perspective on firing a their weapons.

"They know machine guns," said Byers. "They have different methods that add to the training."

An example of the different techniques the Australians use is, while firing in the prone, only

the balls of their feet and the tripod touch the ground.

By the end of training, Soldiers will be able to lay precision bursts down range on targets 600 meters to 800 meters away in day and night conditions.

According to Byers, with the techniques taught in the training, Soldiers will be able to maximize the use of their weapon and ammunition.

"Whether the target is in a field or in a window," said Byers, "Soldiers will be able to identify and kill the target."



Photo by Pfc. Matt Wrzesinski
Sgt. John Bissen, C Co, 2nd Bn., receives instruction from Sgt. Glen White instructor from the Australian Army.



Photo by Pfc. Matt Wrzesinski
Sgt. Matthew Evans, B Comp., 1st Batt., fires down range as Staff Sgt. Benjamin Roos, locates tracer rounds being fired by an instructor and instructs Evans where to fire.

RAK 7 Notes

I would like to congratulate you on your deployment to JRTC. For some of you it was a first. For others it was one in a long list of training missions. For all of us it was a learning experience and an opportunity to address our strengths and weaknesses. This was an important step in preparing ourselves and our soldiers for the monumental task we will face shortly in Iraq.

JRTC is over, but our duty to prepare our units for combat has just begun. As leaders take it upon yourselves to train your soldiers above and beyond the standard.

Soldiers take the initiative to keep you and your fellow soldiers mentally and physically ready for combat.

Now is the time to take care of personal and family issues as well. Be proactive in preparing your family and financial situations for your absence. Your focus must be on mission accomplishment in Iraq. Tie up all the loose ends now because there will be no time for second thoughts once we get on that plane.

You owe it to yourself, your family and your fellow soldiers to be ready. Stay focused and stay motivated. RAKKASAN!

3rd BCT Public Affairs Staff

The Rakkasan Report is an official publication of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team. It is published monthly by the 3rd BCT Public Affairs Office. Contents of the Rakkasan Report are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the US Government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army, or Fort Campbell, Ky.

We welcome the submission of news items, articles, and photographs. Submissions should be made to the 3rd BCT Public Affairs Office, Bldg. 6760 A Shaw Valley Rd., Ft. Campbell. Items may be telephoned to (270) 798-6542 or emailed to jesse.riggin@campbell.army.mil.

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College Football Team Gets Taste of Soldier Life

By Pfc. Matt Wrzesinski

3rd BCT Public Affairs

Firing a rifle, repelling out of a helicopter and conducting raids on villages are all tasks Soldiers do on a daily basis and don't think twice about it. Although these tasks are exclusive to a Soldier's life, visitors to Fort Campbell get a little taste of this life during a tour of the post March 6.

The University of Tennessee-Martin football team visited Fort Campbell for a tour of the post and to get a feel for what it is Soldier's do on a daily basis.

"I wanted to bring the players here

today to broaden their horizons," said Matt Griffin, Head Coach, "They need to realize there are other things going on in this world outside of campus."

The team started their day off by visiting the Dietrich Simulation Center where they were given the opportunity to fire an M-16 while participating in different simulated scenarios.

"It was a lot harder to aim then I expected," said Abner Smith, wide receiver. "I now have a deeper respect for Soldiers now that I know it isn't as easy as it looks."

After getting the feel of firing an M-16, the players moved on to Cassidy Military Operations in Urban Terrain site to view Soldiers conduct a mock raid the town.

"It was an eye opening experience," said Bryan Harris, Punter.

"You hear about what is going on overseas," said Harris, "This gave us a clear picture of what it is that Soldiers do over there."

After watching the Soldiers in action, players got a chance to participate in an activity that most Fort Campbell Soldiers have done at least once, repelling down the Air Assault wall.

According to Harris, he was

amazed by the way the demonstrators flew down the ropes.

"I don't know how they made it down the ropes that fast," said Harris. "I could barely make it down."

Griffin had a list of ideals that he wanted his players to gain from the Soldiers during the tour.

"I think teamwork is the most important thing we can get from this trip," said Griffin, "The Army exemplifies the meaning of the word in everything they do."

According to Griffin, he wanted his players to see the precision the Soldiers show in their day to day jobs. He pushes his players to be perfect on every play and feels the best way for them to learn is by seeing how the Soldiers practice their mission over and over until they're perfect.

Along with Griffin, his coaching staff agrees players can learn from the Soldiers.

"I wanted the players to see what it's like to be a Soldier," said Mark Lister, defensive coordinator, "and how selfless each Soldier is."

Although we compete on different fields, the players noticed similarities between a Soldier's job and there's.

"Although we have different jobs," said Smith, "We both put in the time practicing, prepare for the task and give all we have to complete it successfully."



Photo by Pfc. Matt Wrzesinski

Abner Smith, Tennessee-Martin wide receiver, gets the chance to look down the barrel of an M-4 Carbine rifle for the first time.

Chaplains Corner

MARCH HOLY DAY SERVICES

PROTESTANT SERVICES

23 March 7:00PM Candlelight Communion Service at Soldier's Chapel
 24 March 12:00 Maundy Thursday Service at Memorial Chapel
 27 March 7:00 Community Easter Sunrise Service at Soldiers Chapel
 27 March 8:00 Gospel Easter Service at Memorial Chapel
 27 March 11:00 Protestant Easter Service at Memorial Chapel
 27 March 11:00 Protestant Easter Service at Soldiers Chapel
 7 March 11:00 Contemporary (The Bridge) Easter Service At Fellowship Chapel

CATHOLIC SERVICES

Wednesdays 6:00 during Lent-Stations of the Cross with Benediction
 except Mar 16 followed by "Lenten Meager Meal"
 4 March 11:45 First Friday/Eucharistic Adoration following Mass
 16 March 6:30 Penance Service
 24 March 7:00 Holy Thursday followed by special Meager Meal
 25 March 7:00 Good Friday/Veneration of the Cross
 26 March 8:00 Holy Saturday/Easter Vigil Mass
 27 March 9:30 and 12:30 Easter Sunday/Mass

JEWISH SERVICES

24 March 6:00 PM Purim Peach Chapel Reading of Megillah Dairy Potluck
 24 April 5:00 PM Passover Memorial Chapel

Gatekeepers Keep Rakkasans Safe During JRTC

By Pfc. Matt Wrzesinski
3rd BCT Public Affairs

There are many aspects involved in establishing the right level of force protection near US facilities in deployed locations.

Soldiers of the 626th Brigade Support Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment were in charge of security at the Brigade Support Area entry control points during the Rakkasans rotation at the Joint Readiness Training Center in Fort Polk, Louisiana, February 9-28.

According to Command Sergeant Major Stephen Blake, the 626th Battalion command sergeant major, the first step in building an effective entry control point is an intimidating appearance of impenetrability.

"We laid down 2000 rolls of concertino wire in 12 hours," said Blake. "We want to make it so the enemy does not want to mess with us."

"Make them look for a soft target because you are a hard one," said Blake.

Even though the gate may look tough, the guards at the gate are the ones who provide security and conduct searches.

"We stop every vehicle before it enters our area," said Blake, "My Soldiers then check the vehicle from top to bottom, leaving no area unseen."

Blake challenges his Soldiers to make the gate and the security they provide the best they possibly can. "I challenge my Soldiers to upgrade the gate everyday," said Blake. "I want my Soldiers to take pride in their work."

According to Blake, three things he wants his Soldiers to remember during their shifts are to be alert, to stay focused, and to be suspicious.

Soldiers agree that Blake is instrumental in instilling skills in them that will lead to the success of the gate.

"Something that he has always preached to us is to stay alert in all situations," said Pvt.

Vincent Moravec, Bravo Company, 626th BSB. "This is important because if I stay alert, I can catch things and keep the people inside safe."

Although safety is a priority, the Soldiers must also be able to process many vehicles quickly because they do not want to leave Soldiers stranded outside the gate if they need shelter from fire.

"We have two lanes open at all times so we can let vehicles in if they are taking fire," said Blake. "We do not want to leave our fellow comrades in harm's way."

When an entry control point is up and

running at its full potential, it makes it easier for Soldiers inside the perimeter to complete their jobs.

"We are the first line of defense against the enemy," said Spc. Stephen Ranger, Bravo Company, 626th BSB. "Our job is to allow everyone else to do theirs without worry."

"If this gate is secure then the Brigade doesn't need to worry," said Blake. "They can go to sleep at night knowing that somebody is not only manning the perimeter but somebody is inspecting every piece of equipment rolling in here."



Photo by Pfc. Matt Wrzesinski

Spc. Milton Hardy, Bravo Company, 626th Brigade Support Battalion, stands guard at the main gate during the Rakkasans training at the Joint Readiness Training Center in Fort Polk, LA.

B.O.S.S.

Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers
March Events

19th Paintball Competition

23rd Veteran's Home Visit - 55 Seats available- All day Event-Lunch included Volunteers Call the Boss office at 798-7858/7837

Operation Bears That Care - Boss is collecting donations of stuffed animals for children in crisis. Ask your unit's Boss rep for more information.

If you have any questions or suggestions concerning BOSS activities, please contact PFC Kraus, 3rd BCT's Boss Rep, at kenia.kraus@us.army.mil



Most soldiers on the battlefield neglect their ears in order to hear commands over the cacophony of weapons fire. The dismounted soldier requires a non-linear, or level dependent, earplug. The Combat Arms Ear Plug lowers the noise level of weapons fire while marginally interfering with the level of speech communication. This is an upgrade to the traditional ear plug that muffles all sounds impairing the soldier's ability to hear verbal commands. In addition, a detection model developed at the Army Research Lab predicts a normal-hearing soldier can detect a truck with a low frequency noise signature at the same distance (800 meters) *with or without* the non-linear plug. That detection capability is cut in half with conventional foam plugs.

For more information on stock numbers and distributors of the Combat Arms Earplug call Mr. Skip Stuck at the Rak Safety Office 798-7006.